

Media Release

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier



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THE BIGGEST HOSPITAL PROJECT IN AUSTRALIA'S HISTORY

The Andrews Labor Government will deliver the biggest hospital project in Australia's history, with massive upgrades to the Royal Melbourne Hospital and the Royal Women's Hospital and the construction of a new Arden medical precinct – giving patients from right across Victoria the very best of care – connected by a brand new train line.

Every year, more than 45,000 patients are transferred from our regions and suburbs to be treated at the Royal Melbourne Hospital (RMH). The Women's delivers more than 9,000 babies and cares for more than 2,000 babies in its neonatal intensive care unit annually, as well as treating women from all over Victoria.

Only Labor will make sure these hospitals can keep providing exceptional care for generations to come – because we know that when the Liberals are in power, all they do is cut health funding and go to war with our paramedics and nurses.

The RMH and the Women's have suffered savage, repeated attacks from the Liberals. When Matthew Guy was a key adviser to Jeff Kennett, the Liberals closed beds and sacked doctors, nurses, pharmacists, cooks, and cleaners at both hospitals – described at the time as cuts that led to 'third world conditions.'

They did it again the next time they got the chance – when Matthew Guy's Liberals were last in government, they cut \$1 billion from health funding, closed more beds and sacked more workers.

Whether it's a mum from Moonee Ponds giving birth at the Women's or a man from Morwell receiving heart surgery at the RMH, these world-class hospitals are for every Victorian – and they should be preserved for generations to come.

That's why the Andrews Labor Government will embark on Australia's biggest ever health infrastructure project, beginning a \$5 - \$6 billion upgrade and expansion that will deliver a total of more than 1,800 beds and treatment spaces.

The Labor Government will make an initial investment of \$2 - \$2.5 billion to start what will be a 12-year project, establishing a new medical precinct in the future suburb of Arden which will be home to new campuses of both hospitals.

The Arden campuses will be centres for elective surgery, outpatient treatment, clinical trials, rehabilitation and low-risk women's healthcare services, while the redeveloped Parkville sites will focus on emergency, trauma and acute care.

Put simply, if you're seeing a heart specialist, you'll visit your doctor at RMH Arden – and if you're having a heart attack you'll be taken to the RMH Parkville.

Similarly, pregnant women will have their outpatient appointments at the Women's Arden campus, and if they are experiencing complications, give birth at the Women's campus in Parkville.

The project will provide a major boost to health system capacity every year, including:

- An additional 10,500 elective procedures, through 8 new theatres at the RMH Arden campus
- Enabling 1,000 more patients to receive critical care across both campuses
- Capacity for 2,500 more births at the Women's

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A new *Home-Based Care Hub* will become the centre of home care coordination between health services, hospitals and patients – to ensure we’re delivering modern and convenient in-home care to Victorians.

The initial investment will fund the first stage of works, delivering the first hospital tower in the Arden precinct – creating more than 400 beds and treatment spaces.

The first stage is expected to create 7,500 construction jobs, and around 12,500 more in the supply chain for the project.

The next stages will rebuild and expand the hospital buildings at Parkville, delivering two world-class upgrades for RMH and the Women’s.

The project will deliver additional education and research space to ensure the hospitals are training our future healthcare workers to work at health services across the state.

The redevelopment will support further collaboration with the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute and other medical research partners to work on ways to better integrate teaching, training and research with patient care.

The Parkville and Arden medical precincts will also be linked by the Metro Tunnel. From 2025, both will have brand-new train stations, making it a two-minute trip between hospital campuses and connecting them to the Monash Medical Centre in Clayton.

Creating these important links will make it easy for healthcare workers, patients and visitors from across the state to travel to each campus.

Once the Suburban Rail Loop is complete, the Parkville and Arden medical precincts will be connected to other important health sites such as the Box Hill Hospital and the Austin Hospital.

We’re also delivering a \$270 million healthcare workforce package to provide free degrees, training and upskilling for the next generation of nurses and midwives – and with this redevelopment, giving healthcare workers more training spaces than ever before to up-skill within the hospital system.

Quotes attributable to Premier Daniel Andrews

“These hospitals belong to us all – they care for some of the sickest and most seriously hurt patients and Victorians are rightly proud of them, but they’re outgrowing their current sites.”

“We’re starting the biggest health infrastructure project in our nation’s history, growing our healthcare workforce and giving workers more training and research opportunities than ever before – proving that good governments can do more than one thing at a time.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas

“Healthcare workers at the RMH and the Women’s will always remember Jeff Kennett and Matthew Guy’s savage cuts – described at the time as cuts that led to third world conditions in the heart of Melbourne.”

“The Liberals’ record on hospitals is nothing more than cuts and closures – only the Andrews Labor Government will invest in the hospitals and the health workers Victoria needs.”

Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

“Victorians shouldn’t be forced to choose between healthcare or infrastructure – good governments can and must do both.”

“Supporting a world-class health system is about more than building hospitals. We’re also investing in the transport infrastructure we need to make it easier for healthcare workers and patients alike to get where they need to go.”